

Message Text

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ACTION AID-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 IO-03 ISO-00 IGA-01 EB-03 AGR-03 MMS-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 /033 W

----- 073613

R 101415Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6622

/AMEMBASSY NIAMEY 1559

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY LOME

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 1579

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: UNDP, EAID, DM

SUBJ: OFFER OF USAID PERSONNEL TO UNDP

REF COTONOU 1538 (NOTAL)

1. ACTING UNDP RESREP MICHAEL BLAISE ASKED ME TO ATTEND MEETING OCT9 WITH ALL UN PROJECT DIRECTORS IN DAHOMEY. BLAISE HAD RECEIVED CABLE FROM UNDP/NY CONCERNING AN OFFER MADE BY DR FEI OF USAID MADE DURING 1973 RESREP CONFERENCE IN ADDIS TO SUPPLY USAID SENIOR PROFESSIONAL, JOBS, AND ASSOCIATE EXPERTS TO UNDP. BLAISE CALLED MEETING TO FIND ANSWERS TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS AND TO INFORM US UNOFFICIALLY OF THE PERSONNEL WHICH MIGHT BE DESIRED BY UNDP/DAHOMEY. I EXPLAINED THAT I WAS NOT INFORMED ABOUT OFFER AND HAD NO GUIDANCE ON WHICH TO REPLY TO THEIR QUESTIONS, BUT WOULD TAKE NOTE AND GET ANSWERS.

2. PRINCIPLE CONCERN WAS WHO WOULD PAY FOR USAID PERSONNEL. I SAID IT SEEMED LOGICAL THAT IF AID WAS SUPPLYING THEM, THEN AID WOULD PAY THEIR SALARIES. WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF THIS IS THE CASE AND IF THERE ARE ANY LOCAL COSTS TO BE BORNE BY UNDP? HIS SECOND CONCERN WAS WHETHER USAID PERSONNEL WOULD BECOME "UN AGENCY OFFICIALS" FOR THIS PROJECT. RESREP MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WOULD ACCEPT ANY SYSTEM WHERE PERSONNEL HAD TWO BOSSES
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TO REPORT TO AND TAKE ORDERS FROM (USAID AND UNDP). IF THEY ARE NOT

SOLELY UNDER HIS AUTHORITY, HE IS NOT INTERESTED. THE ONLY TYPE OF PEOPLE HE WOULD ACCEPT NOT BEING SOLELY UNDER HIS ORDERS WOULD BE OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS COMING MERELY TO EVALUATE PROJECTS. BALISE ALSO INSISTS THAT ANY USAID PEOPLE ASSIGNED TO DAHOMEY BE FLUENT IN FRENCH. AT FIRST HE SAID THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE AS GOOD AS NATIVE-SPEAKING FRENCHMEN. WHEN I INTERJECTED THIS MIGHT LIMIT OUR POSSIBILITIES, HE BACKED OFF SLIGHTLY TO WHERE HE WOULD ACCEPT PERSONNEL EQUIVALENT TO FSI 4-4 IN FRENCH.

3. SPECIFIC PERSONNEL WHICH MIGHT BE REQUESTED ARE;

A. MINERAL RESEARCH PROJECT; WOULD REQUIRE A MINEROLOGIST/PETROLOGIST CAPABLE OF HANDLING LAB WORK AND POSSIBLY AN ADMIN OFFICER. THIS PROJECT RUNS UNTIL END OF 1976.

B. RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT; WOULD REQUIRE ONE AGRONOMIC RESEARCHER, AND ONE EXPERT IN COOPERATIVE ACTION KNOWLEDGEABLE IN THE "FRENCH METHOD/OF ORGANIZING COOPERATIVES AS OPPOSED TO THE CANADIAN OR UR METHODS.

C. ANIMAL TRACTION: REQUIRES AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER ABLE TO CONTROL PROJECT FINANCES AND OTHER ADMIN WORK. ALSO, AGRO-STOLOGICAL SPECIALIST (PASTURAGE EXPERT).

D. NATIONAL PARKS TOURIST DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: REQUIRES ONE ASSOCIATE EXPERT IN CARTOGRAPHY, ONE PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEER FOR PLANNING ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN UNDEVELOPED GAME PRESERVE.

E. UNDP COTONOU OFFICE: ONE ADMIN OFFICER AND A JUNIOR ADMIN ASSISTANT. ADMIN OFFICER WOULD HAVE TO FIRST UNDERGO THREE MONTHS TRAINING AT FAO IN ROME OR AT UNDP/NY TO LEARN PROCEDURES.

4. WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE AND BACKGROUND IN THIS AID OFFER.

5. COMMENT: BLAISE IS PRESENTLY ONLY THE ACTING UNDP REP. UNCLEAR WHETHER HE WILL BE ELEVATED TO THAT POSITION PERMANENTLY OR IF UNDP SEEKING ANOTHER PERMANENT REP. EMBASSY
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WOULD HOPE UNDP COULD FIND ANOTHER PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AS WORKING WITH BLAISE MIGHT PROVE DIFFICULT. IN FACT, EMBASSY WOULD BE RETICENT ABOUT RECOMMENDING ASSIGNMENT OF USAID PERSONNEL TO WORK FOR HIM. HE WAS VERY DEFINITE ANTI-US BIAS AND IS ONE OF THE MOST CHAUVINISTIC FRENCHMEN EMBASSY HAS RUN INTO. A GOOD EXAMPLE WAS HIS INSISTENCE THAT ANYBODY WORKING FOR HIM SPEAK AND BE ABLE TO WRITE TECHNICAL REPORTS IN IMPECCABLE FRENCH. HE HAS ALREADY HAD ONE RUN-IN WITH PEACE CORPS. IN THAT

CASE, WITHOU HEARING ALL THE FACTS, HE WAS MORE THAN WILLING
TO PLACE ENTIRE BLAME FOR A SNAFU ON PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS
WHEN IN FACT THE PARTICULAR PROBLEM WAS CAUSED BY FAILURE
ON PART OF FAO. SHOULD ANY UNDP PROJECTS RUN INTO PROBLEMS,
EMBASSY CERTAIN BLAISE WOULD FIND SOME WAY OF PLACING ENTIRE
BLAME ON ANY USAID PEOPLE WORKING FOR HIM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, PERSONNEL, WAGES, MEETINGS, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974COTONO01579
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740288-0945
From: COTONOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741057/aaaabwnk.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AID
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: COTONOU 1538 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 MAY 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <13 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OFFER OF USAID PERSONNEL TO UNDP
TAGS: EAID, DM, UNDP
To: STATE AMEMBASSY NIAMEY 1559
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005